

Message Text

SECRET

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12

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-06 IO-03 NSC-07 NSCE-00 PM-03

SP-02 L-02 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00

PRS-01 DRC-01 /065 W

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R 080753Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5887

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USUN 579

CINCPAC

S E C R E T MANILA 9472

LIMDIS

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, RP

SUBJ: MUSLIM REBELLION IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

1. EFFORTS TOWARDS "POLITICAL SOLUTION" OF MUSLIM REBELLION IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES HAVE ACCELERATED IN PAST THREE DAYS WITH ARRIVAL IN MANILA OF INDONESIAN GENERAL YOGA SUGOMO. AS RESULT MEETINGS BETWEEN YOGA AND PRESIDENT MARCOS, DEFINITIVE STEPS ARE NOW UNDERWAY BY PHILIPPINE AUTHORITIES TO ARRANGE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SENIOR OFFICERS OF PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF REBELS, INCLUDING MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT. THESE STEPS COME AFTER A SIGNIFICANT UPSURGE OF REBEL ACTION ON ISLAND OF MINDANAO, IN WHICH ATTACKS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, CAME TO BE CHARACTERIZED BY SABOTAGE ACTIONS AGAINST ECONOMIC TARGETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE INSTALLATIONS.

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2. YOGA, TOGETHER WITH INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR, MET WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS AND SENIOR ADVISERS AT 11:30 ON AUGUST 7 AT MALACANANG. ACCORDING TO ACCOUNT OF MEETING GIVEN ME EVENING AUGUST 7 BY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MELCHOR, WHO WAS PRESENT, INDONESIANS SAID THEY HAD COME TO CONCLUSION THAT MUSLIM INSURRECTION COULD ONLY BE RESOLVED IF MARCOS DEALT WITH NUR MISUARI AS HEAD OF MNLF. MARCOS REPORTEDLY SAID HE WAS WILLING TO INCLUDE MISUARI AMONG THOSE WITH WHOM HE WOULD DEAL, BUT DID NOT RPT NOT CONSIDER HIM SOLE EFFECTIVE LEADER OF REBELLION.

3. INDONESIANS ACCEPTED THIS FACT, AND SAID THEY FELT MISUARI WOULD BE WILLING ACT IN CONCERT OTHER REBEL LEADERS. THEY ALSO SAID THEY ARE PREPARED ARRANGE MEETING (PRESUMABLY ON INDONESIAN SOIL) IF PHILS WILL DESIGNATE NEGOTIATORS. THEREUPON, MARCOS REPORTEDLY DESIGNATED CONSTABULARY CHIEF MAJOR GENERAL FIDEL RAMOS AS HIS PRINCIPAL NEGOTIATOR.

4. IN DISCUSSING THIS DEVELOPMENT WITH SECRETARY OF DEFENSE PONCE ENRILE MORNING AUGUST 8, I ASKED WHETHER PHILS FELT MNLF WOULD MAKE UNACCEPTABLE DEMANDS FOR SECESSION, OR WHETHER THEY WOULD NEGOTIATE WITHIN FRAMEWORK THAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO MARCOS. ENRILE EXPRESSED SURPRISING OPTIMISM, "BASED ON OUR INFORMATION", THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE CONDUCTED REASONABLY AND WOULD PROBABLY LEAD TO SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION.

5. COMMENT: PHIL LEADERSHIP, ESPECIALLY ENRILE, HAVE BEEN INCREASINGLY DEPRESSED IN RECENT WEEKS BY OBVIOUS DETERIORATION OF SITUATION IN MUSLIM AREAS, SPECIFICALLY IN MINDANAO. I THEREFORE THINK THEIR URGE TO NEGOTIATE IS GENUINE. THEY HAVE CHOSEN THEIR BEST POSSIBLE MILITARY NEGOTIATOR IN THE PERSON OF RAMOS, WHO IS WIDELY EXPECTED TO BECOME NEXT CHIEF OF STAFF. HE IS INTELLIGENT, PATIENT, SCHOLARLY (WEST POINT GRADUATE) MAN WITH CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE. HIS CONSTABULARY FORCES HAVE BORNE THE BRUNT OF THE MUSLIM HIT-AND-RUN ATTACKS AND HE DEARLY WANTS A SETTLEMENT. THE TWO POTENTIAL STICKING POINTS, ASSUMING TALKS CAN BE ARRANGED, ARE NUR MISUARI'S EXTREMIST VIEWS, AND THE DESIRE OF MARCOS TO INCLUDE AMONG THE "REBEL"

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NEGOTIATORS A FEW MUSLIM TRAINED SEALS LIKE RASCID LUCMAN AND MACAPANTON ABBAS, WHO ARE GENERALLY IDENTIFIED AS MALACANANG STOOGES.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

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